

United States District Court, Southern District of Florida
Notice of Vacancy

Position:	Pro Se Law Clerk
Number of Vacancies:	One (1) Fulltime-Position
Vacancy Ann No:	2017-JDS-05
Location:	Miami, Florida
Salary Range:	Salary Commensurate with Legal Work Experience
Open Date:	January 18, 2017
Closing Date:	February 8, 2017 or Open Until Filled

Position Overview

The Pro Se Law Clerk provides legal advice and assistance to the Court in connection with prisoner petitions and complaints. Performs substantive screening after filing of all prisoner and inmate petitions and motions, including state habeas corpus petitions, motions to vacate sentence, and civil rights complaints. Drafts appropriate recommendations and orders for the Court's signature. Reviews all complaints, petitions, and pleadings that have been filed to determine issues involved and basis for relief. Performs research, as required, to assist the Court in preparing opinions. Maintains liaison between the Court and litigants. Corresponds with other officials, such as U.S. Attorney, as required. Evaluates present procedures to determine new innovations for increasing the effectiveness in handling complaints, petitions, and pleadings. Reviews the docket of pending prisoner and inmate litigation to assure the proper progress of such cases and advises the Court of those cases where action by the Court is appropriate. Compiles statistics and prepares periodic reports, as required, which reflect the status and flow of cases. Identifies problem areas, makes recommendations, and offers solutions, as required by the Court, Administrative Office, and other officials. Keeps abreast of changes in the law to aid the Court in adjusting to new legislation in the pro-se area. Provides information, guidance, and advice to judges, magistrates, and other personnel working in the pro-se area. Advises appropriate personnel on the status of particular cases. Performs other duties as assigned.

Appointing Authority and Reporting Relationship

The appointing authority for this position is the Chief United States District Court Judge. This position reports and works under the direction of the United States Magistrate Judge, Pro Se Division.

Qualification/Requirements

To qualify for the position of Pro Se Law Clerk, an individual must be a law school graduate (or be certified as having completed all law school studies and requirements and merely awaiting conferment of degree) from a law school of recognized standing, and have demonstrated one of the following accomplishments or proficiencies: standing within the upper third of the class from a law school on the approved list of the American Bar Association or that of the Association of American Law Schools; or experience on the editorial board of a law review of such a school; or graduation from a law school on the approved list of the American Bar Association or that of the Association of American Law Schools with an LLM degree; or demonstrated proficiency in legal studies which, in the opinion of the appointing official, is the equivalent of the above. The following are examples of criteria which are considered to be acceptable as equivalent:

- Publication of a noteworthy article in a law school student publication or other scholarly publication or
- Special high-level honors for academic excellence in law school, such as election to Order of the Coif; or
- Winning of a moot court competition or membership on a moot court team that represents the law school in competition with other law schools; or
- Participation in the legal aid or their law school clinical program sanctioned by the law school provided that such participation and experience were not for academic credit.
- Summer experience as a law clerk to a state or local judge or law clerk experience on a continuous basis (either full or part time) in a private firm while attending school, i.e., "working the way through college" provided that such participation and experience were not for academic credit.

Legal Work Experience

Progressively responsible experience in the practice of law, in legal research, legal administration or equivalent experience received after graduation from law school. Major or substantial legal activities while in military service may be credited, on a month-for-month basis whether before or after graduation, but not to exceed one year if before graduation from law school.

Court Preferred Skills/Experience

- Prior legal experience is highly desirable. A minimum of 3 years of previous federal clerkship experience and/or prior litigation experience in the private or public sector gained after law school graduation.
- Standing within the upper quarter (25%) of the class upon graduation from law school.
- Experience in planning and organizing work, establishing priorities, and working independently.
- An understanding of federal habeas corpus law and proficiency in the use of LEXIS and WESTLAW.
- Outstanding legal research/writing skills. Ability to communicate clearly, concisely and informatively both orally and in writing. Experience reviewing documents and extracting data.
- Proficient computer skills, internet research, and word processing skills.

Experience/Salary Grade

Salary matching within applicable salary range may be available at Grades JSP 12-14. Pay rates are subject to Judicial Officer approval and may also require advance approval from the Administrative Office of the United States Courts.

The table below shows the number of years of legal work experience required to qualify for appointment as a Pro Se Law Clerk at the applicable JSP grade level. Please note that appointment to JSP 12 or above requires that the candidate be a member of the bar of state, territory, or federal court of general jurisdiction.

Eligible for Appointment at JSP Grade Level:	Years of Legal Work Experience After Law School Graduation	Bar Membership Required
JSP Grade 11, Step 1 (\$63,909)	0	No
JSP Grade 12, Step 1 (\$76,602)	1 Full-Time Years	Yes
JSP Grade 13, Step 1 (\$91,089)	2 Full-Time Years	Yes
JSP Grade 14, Step 1 (\$107,640)	3 Full-Time Years	Yes

Personal Characteristics

The successful candidate is mature, responsible, poised, tactful, exercises good judgment, uses initiative, and maintains a professional appearance and demeanor at all times. Excellent attendance and punctuality highly desired.

Background Check

This is a Sensitive position within the Judiciary. The selected candidate will be subject to a criminal history background check and a technical fingerprint check through the FBI Criminal Justice Information Services Division database as a condition of employment. Employment will be considered provisional until the background check is completed.

Benefits

The following benefits are available:

- Paid national holidays throughout the calendar year.
- Participation in a pre-tax Federal Employees Health Insurance Program.
- Participation in group insurance programs: Dental/Vision, Life, Long Term Care, Long Term Disability.
- Participation in a pre-tax Flexible Spending Account
- Accrue paid vacation time.
- Participation in a Retirement Program with investments opportunities through the Thrift Savings Plan.

How To Apply

Qualified applicants should **submit** required documents “**electronically**” in **pdf format only**. Please make sure to **annotate Announcement No.: 2017-JDS-05 on subject line** and email to: flsd_hrmail@flsd.uscourts.gov. Note: please do not copy/paste your documents into the email. If you do not follow all application requirements, your application will not be considered.

A complete application includes:

- A **Cover Letter** that references the position of Pro Se Law Clerk.
- A detailed **Resume** that includes exact dates of employment and salary history.
- **Copies** of the final **Law School Transcripts**, and **Bar Membership**, if applicable.
- A **Legal Writing Sample**.

Employment with the United States Courts

Employees of the United States District Court serve under “Excepted Appointment” and are considered “At-Will” employees. The Federal Courthouse and Chambers are designated as non-smoking areas. EFT (Electronic Funds Transfer) is mandatory, therefore payment for net pay (paycheck) is issued via direct deposit. The United States District Court is an equal opportunity employer.

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